

Passaic River Superfund Community Advisory Group Summary and Action Items from the Thursday May 10, 2012 Monthly Meeting

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Agenda Items

- Project Updates and Discussion
- Update on River Mile 10.9 Removal and Pilot Projects
- CAG Request for Technical Support
- General River Communication Activities, Messaging

Project Updates and Discussion

- CAG members noted that a Hess natural gas station is being proposed on the Passaic a few miles from Newark, while another chemical facility is being planned on the Passaic at Hiatt avenue to transport hazardous and corrosive materials and provide short-term storage. These projects are still in the permitting stage.
- The Phase I Removal project has completed dredging and processing of 65% of the contaminated material. All operations are going well, and the monitoring system has worked well. The top six feet of material went smoothly, while the lower 6 feet contained a lot of debris and exhibited more clumping which required more screening. As a result, this will proceed slower than the less contaminated and more homogeneous materials in the upper layers.
- The perimeter air monitoring program showed the first exceedance of a level of concern for chlorobenzene (not at full health levels of concern, but at 80%, which was enough to slow down operations to understand what is happening). These levels were a result of dredging the most contaminated sediments. The exceedance happened on one day and at one location and immediately went back down. This location was next to the sediment processing area, and monitoring closest to residential areas showed only low levels.
- Worker health and safety is monitored using roving meters, and in areas where the sediments are really disturbed. Workers wear respirators on days where the most hazardous materials are being dredged. Still more of that material to be removed, and will dress workers in respiratory gear for all remaining high level areas.
- Benzene is not one of the chemicals we expect to see.
- Should be done dredging by June.
- One of the jobs training graduates has already been offered a full time job, and has moved over to another subcontractor making room for yet another graduate to get a job.
- There will be a CAG tour of the project on Wednesday May 16, at 3:00 PM. There is still room, and you may can come at the last minute but do try to let David know. The tour will begin at the sediment processing facility and conclude

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at the dredging site.

- Is there any further information about the impact of Argentina's takeover of Repsol, Maxis Energy's parent company? The bottom line is that if anything happens to stop funding to Tiera, then Occidental Chemical would have to step in and pay. All the required signatures on the orders.
- Still on schedule for completing the focused feasibility study (FFS) on the lower 8 miles later this year. Modeling has produced good long-term predictions and risk assessors are now doing their calculations. Still looking back at the modeling results to ensure that they make sense. The alternatives have not changed from the previous version of the FFS, just running the risk numbers.
- SandandGravel.com wrote a report on the NACEPT committee workgroup report, Ella Fillapone was on that committee. She developed a letter asking EPA to take a further look at Cement Lock Technology as a follow-on to the Army Corps Report that requested evaluation of commercialization of the process. This was part of the Vulnerable Populations Committee of NACEPT, each member was asked to present a vulnerable population and write a two page report that identifies and finds solutions. Ella presented her report on the Lower Passaic. A wide variety of projects were proposed and vetted across the committee. The final report compiled the different projects and tried to make all the projects equal, Ella believed there was a lot of interest in the Passaic. The report can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ocem/nacept/>

ACTION ITEMS

- Find out more information about the proposed Hess plant and chemical operation on the river and distribute information for those who are interested, send any links or information to Doug and he will distribute to everyone.

Update on River Mile 10.9 Removal and Pilot Projects

- Things going well on RM 10.9 negotiations, it will then be up to the CPG to determine who signs on to do any bench scale or pilot scale work. The deadline is June 30, and there is a very high probability that there will be a settlement. Not every CPG member company has to sign on to do the work, just need enough parties to make it work. The probable cost is between \$20 and \$30 million, though a formal design will need to be completed to see what it will take.
- Question about getting to removal by 2013, that seems very fast compared to the Phase 1 removal project. Yes, this is a time critical action so it moves faster. Very limited in scope, just removing the top two feet of sediment and capping to control the movement.
- What about the Phase 2 removal, and the lower 8 miles, where will all the dredged material go? This is the critical question and still is one of the major decisions as we moved forward.
- There is a cap on the Lister Avenue property containing the materials from the earlier cleanup effort there, and it has gone through three five year reviews to date to ensure its ongoing effectiveness. These reports are available on line.
- Are we actually getting to the hottest material by just skimming off the top two feet? This material is much less contaminated than in the Phase 1 removal but

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much more so than the average surface in the river. The primary goal of this removal is to contain the material not remove it.

- Do we know where this material came from? Not easy to pinpoint this, different cases have been made. It is not simple science, a lot of variables can affect the movement of material but we do believe that it has been there for some time. However, it does not change what EPA is going to do.
- How many pilots can be done with this volume of soil? Soil washing vendors can take 5-10,000 yd³ each, there are only two of those and they would need to do laboratory tests first to see if it is worth moving forward with pilots. It is still possible that no pilots will be conducted.
- Are there more sites like RM10.9? Results should be back in June, will look at data to determine if there are additional areas that require more fine-tuned sampling. Ultimately, if areas of similar contamination are found, additional removal projects could be pursued. Every sediment deposit has at least two to three samples now from the three rounds of sampling that have been done.

CAG Request for Technical Support

- Need to have this done in conjunction with release of the FFS which is at the end of this year. The FFS will include a full analysis of all available technologies.
- The proposed plan for the lower 8 miles will not really pick a specific technology, but rather identify a general approach to decontamination vs. disposal. Could pick a class of technology, or more than one technology.
- Any bench scale tests from RM 10.9 will be conducted at the end of summer but pilot scale results not until fall/winter.
- Phase 1 of the technical support could start right away.
- Would need to have the phase 2 evaluations by late fall to inform CAG input to the FFS.
- Another point of input is when EPA meets with National Remedy Review Board, probably at the end of August. EPA submits a package to the Board and key stakeholders can be invited to submit a ten page letter outlining a site option about how cleanup should be performed at the site.
- Might make sense to organize the technical support to first review the bench scale tests and then help with review of the FFS.
- Lots of details here have to be determined before a decision can be made.

ACTION ITEMS

- Want to make sure that the CAG has the opportunity to submit a letter to the National Remedy Review Board. Would need to start the discussion now on what should go into these letters, CAG and TAG should be able to work together in a smaller group to help bring ideas forward. Chairs and Ella will work together on a process.
- Revise the TASC request to have Phase I of literature review and the bench scale results, Phase II to look at the FFS.

General River Communication Activities, Messaging

- EPA reported on the Lyndhurst public meetings that were held in both afternoon and evening sessions. There was good representation from NGOs and officials, overall about 50 people. Lots of good questions and comments. Wanted to get out to folks early, but did not have any real details about the cleanup activities themselves. Questions were asked about impacts on park, staging and storage of materials, and risks. Messages stated that the park is fine to use, but people should avoid contact with mudflats. It was clear that nobody uses the mudflats, they all view the river as polluted and have always stayed out of it. Probably will not need signs.
- Good participation by elected officials, and it will be important to coordinate and work with them.
- Mayor agreed to get someone to sit on the CAG.
- EPA and the State are working together to coordinate and implement ongoing communications.
- Don't expect other mudflats to present as immediate a risk to public health but will be ready to communicate those results and activities as they occur.

Next Meeting

Thursday, June 14, 2012

Next Meeting Topics

- Review draft CAG letter to the National Remedy Review Board
- Technical Support request finalization